

## Chapter 4

### **An Empirical Study of the Development Programs and its Beneficiaries in Darjeeling (1999-2006)**

#### **An Empirical Study of the Rural, Rural-cum-Urban and Urban Development Programs Implemented in Darjeeling within the Year 1999-2006**

#### **Rural Development Programs**

##### **1. Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)**

(Under DGHC)

##### **Concept**

SGSY is a holistic program covering all aspects of self-employment such as organization of the poor into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and providing them training, credit, technology, infrastructure and marketing opportunities. It replaces earlier poverty alleviation programs like Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA), Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY) and Million Wells Scheme (MWS). SGSY places emphasis on group financing for poverty alleviation by organizing the rural poor into self-help groups (SHGs). Accordingly, the bulk of assistance under SGSY is expected to be provided to self-help groups for supporting the group level micro-enterprises of their members. Though assistance may also be provided to individual swarozgaris outside the self-help groups, this component is only secondary and residual in nature. SGSY seeks to promote self-employment opportunities to rural poor through promotion of micro enterprises in clusters, which would facilitate proper implementation and monitoring of the activities effectively. A few activities in each block are identified (known as key activities) and the required forward and backward linkages for the development of the

activity are provided by concerned agencies so as to enable the swarozgaris to generate sustainable income from the investment.<sup>1</sup>

SGSY is the only program under District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). It works according to its own set pattern, which is the same all over India. If the fund allotted for the program is above One Lakh the Chairman of DGHC is informed and if it is less than One Lakh the Project Director of DRDA takes charge.<sup>2</sup>

### **Funding Pattern**

SGSY has been launched from April 1999. It is funded by Central and State Government in the ratio 75:25.<sup>3</sup>

### **Objectives / Purposes**

The objectives of SGSY are to bring the assisted poor rural families above the poverty line by ensuring appreciable increase in the income over a period of time. This objective is to be achieved by organizing the rural poor in the SHGs through a process of social mobilization and augmenting their capacities through managerial and skill training and assisting them to acquire income generated assets through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy. Such assistance is also provided to poor individuals, although priority is given to the SHGs. The scheme is implemented by the District Rural Development Agency in the hill areas of Darjeeling.<sup>4</sup>

### **Target Group**

The target group under SGSY consists of all families below poverty line.

## **2. Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)**

(Under DGHC)

### **Concept**

Creation of employment opportunities with food security has been an important objective of development planning in India. The relatively higher growth of population and labor force has led to an increase in the volume of unemployment and under-

employment from the one Plan period to another. The Government of India aim at bringing employment through wage and self employment into a larger focus with the goal of reducing unemployment and under-employment to a negligible level and of providing food security against hunger. Such an approach is necessary, because it is realized that larger and efficient use of available human and other resources is the most effective way of alleviating poverty, reducing inequalities, improving nutritional levels and sustaining a reasonably high pace of economic growth.<sup>5</sup>

To make a dent on the prevailing poverty, unemployment and slow growth in the rural economy and to provide food security, it is necessary to provide a demand driven infrastructure at the village level to facilitate faster growth in the rural areas and to increase opportunities of employment through access to the market oriented economy. The Ministry of Rural Development reviewed the hitherto on-going Schemes of the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), (the only additional wage employment Scheme for rural areas), the Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) (a rural infrastructure development Scheme) and by merging them into one Scheme, launched the New Scheme of the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) w.e.f. 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2001.<sup>6</sup>

### **Objectives / Purposes**

The primary objective of the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) is to provide greater thrust for generating additional wage employment specially, in the lean agriculture season when the target group of people desperately seeks works because of the absence of agricultural activities resulting in lack of earning. Under this program, schemes are taken up for upliftment of the socio-economic condition of the toiling populace keeping an eye to their food security.<sup>7</sup>

### **Target Group**

The SGRY will be open to all rural poor who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual and unskilled work in and around his village/habitat. The Program is self-targeting in nature. While providing wage employment, preference shall be given to agricultural wage earners, non-agricultural unskilled wage earners, marginal farmers, women, members of Schedule Castes/Schedule Tribes and parents of child labor

withdrawn from hazardous occupations, parents of handicapped children or adult children of handicapped parents who are desirous of working for wage employment.<sup>8</sup>

22.5% of the annual allocation (inclusive of food grains) under the First Stream of the SGRY both at the District and the Block levels shall be earmarked for individual beneficiary schemes of SC/ST families living below the Poverty line (BPL). Minimum 50% of the allocation to the Village Panchayat (inclusive of food grains) shall be earmarked for the creation of need based village infrastructure in SC/ST habitations/wards under the second stream of the SGRY. 30% of employment opportunities should be reserved for women.<sup>9</sup>

### **3. Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)**

(Under DGHC)

#### **Concept**

Since introduction of different poverty alleviation schemes in rural areas it was felt necessary to provide dwelling houses to the houseless BPL families, as a consequence, Indira Awaas Yojana was introduced in 1996. The Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development to provide houses to the poor in the rural areas.<sup>10</sup>

#### **Funding Pattern**

IAY operates as a 100% subsidized centrally sponsored program with the resources being shared on 75:25 basis between Centre and the States.

#### **Objectives / Purposes**

The objective of the IAY is primarily to help construct/ upgrade dwelling units of members of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, freed bonded laborers and other below poverty line, non-SC/ST rural households by providing them a lump-sum financial assistance.<sup>11</sup> (Money allotted for new construction of houses under the scheme is Rs.22,000 increased to 27,000 and for up-gradation it is Rs.10,000 increased to 13,000.)

### **Target Group**

The target groups for houses under the IAY are below poverty line households living in the rural areas belonging to SC/ST, freed bonded laborers and non- SC/ST BPL rural households, widows and next-of-kin to defence personnel/paramilitary forces killed in action residing in rural areas (irrespective of their income criteria), ex-servicemen and retired member of paramilitary forces fulfilling the other conditions.<sup>12</sup>

Prioritization of beneficiaries will be as follows: (i) Freed bonded laborers (ii) SC/ST households – SC/ST households who are victims of atrocity; SC/ST households, headed by widows and unmarried women; SC/ST households affected by flood, natural calamities like earth-quake, cyclone and man-made calamities like riot, other SC/ST households. (iii) Families/ Widows of personnel from defence services/ paramilitary forces, killed in action (iv) Non-SC/ST BPL households (v) Physically and mentally challenged persons (vi) Ex-servicemen and retired members of the paramilitary forces (vii) Displaced persons on account of developmental projects, nomadic/ semi-nomadic, and de-notified tribes, families with physically/ mentally challenged members.<sup>13</sup> Beneficiaries are selected in the meeting of Gram Sansads and final list of beneficiaries is prepared by the Gram Panchayat out of the beneficiaries selected by the Gram Samsads on priority basis. Gram Panchayat shall display prominently the names of beneficiaries on the outer wall of the Gram Panchayat Office.<sup>14</sup>

#### **4. Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (Gramin Awaas)**

(Under DGHC)

##### **Concept**

The Government of India introduced one comprehensive Scheme named Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) in the 2000 for reducing the shortage of housing and also for the healthy development of the habitat for the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families in the rural areas.<sup>15</sup> PMGY is similar to IAY in the sense that the objective of both is to provide dwelling houses to the poor, the difference being PMGY covers cluster of Houses.<sup>16</sup>

### **Funding Pattern**

Resources are shared on 60:40 bases between Centre and the States.<sup>17</sup>

### **Objectives / Purposes and Target Group**

To provide shelter to rural poor BPL belonging to SC/ST living in a cluster; to provide drinking water, sanitation and other infrastructural facilities; not more than 40% of total allocation can be utilized for dwelling units for non SC/ST, BPL families.<sup>18</sup>

## **5. Swajal Dhara**

(Under DGHC)

### **Concept**

To solve the drinking water problem in rural areas the Government has started the Swajal Dhara and Rural Sanitation Program in some Gram Panchayats of the hills (like Rangbull, St. Mary's, Sittong, and Soureni). Villagers have to find a water source that is closest to their village. Then with the help of Panchayat overseer they have to calculate how much expenditure is involved in bringing that water to the village tank. Ten percent of the total cost must be deposited in a bank by the villagers after opening a bank account, the rest (ninety percent) of the cost will be borne by the Government. Those villagers unable to contribute in cash can put in their labor for the project.<sup>19</sup>

Water is today perceived by the public as a social right, to be provided free by the Government, rather than as a resource which must be managed locally as a socio-economic good. There was a general recognition that a transformation from a target based, supply-driven approach which pays little attention to the actual practices/ or preferences of the end users, to a demand-based approach, where users get the service they want and are willing to pay for, was urgently required. Implementation of a participatory, demand driven approach was expected to ensure that the public obtained the level of service they desired and could afford to pay part of the capital cost and fully for the operation and maintenance.<sup>20</sup>

### **Funding Pattern**

Upto 20 percent of the Budget provision for Rural Water Supply Program of Government of India has been earmarked for Swajaldhara Projects. Funds under Swajaldhara will be allocated to the States every year. The releases will be demand responsive up to the maximum allocation for the year. The unspent amount under this will be distributed to States by the end of December. In that, priority will be accorded to those States where Swajaldhara projects need additional funding. Remaining unspent funds will be pooled and distributed to better performing state. Swajaldhara Project funding, excluding community contribution, will be fully met by the Government of India. The minimum share of community contribution for 40 litres per capita per day service level will be 10 percent of the estimated capital cost of the project and funding by Government of India would be restricted to 90 percent of the capital cost. The community contribution towards the capital cost of schemes could be in the form of cash, kind, labor, land or combination of these.<sup>21</sup>

### **Objectives/Purposes**

Swajaldhara is a process project designed to enable the community to have access to acceptable, adaptable, sustainable and affordable safe drinking water system, the reform process does not end with the physical completion of water supply schemes. In several ways, it marks the beginning of a new and more challenging phase in the process where the local community has to shoulder the responsibility of operation and maintenance of the system. This entails putting into operation the decisions taken by the community with regard to tariff structure, collection of monthly water charges from the users, ensuring proper maintenance of the system so as to ensure reliable and regular supply of safe drinking water. Towards this end, the community will have to arrange for periodic quality checks of water being supplied as well as ensure sustainability of source. This may include taking decisions regulating exploitation of ground water sources and preventing contamination of water sources. All the activities would require high degree of community mobilization and awareness.<sup>22</sup>

### **Target Groups**

Swajaldhara Project is ideally suited for small village based self-sufficient schemes or multi-Panchayat/village schemes. The community contribution is not less than 10 per cent of the cost within the village/habitation.<sup>23</sup>

## 6. Wasteland and Watershed Development Program

### National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR)

(Under DGHC)

#### Concept

The basic feature of the Watershed Development Program is reclamation of wasteland and degraded land so as to make it suitable for undertaking gainful economic activities in a sustainable manner with the active participation of the community throughout the entire stages of formulation, implementation of project components and also maintenance of the assets created. Ground water recharge and growth of vegetative cover on nearly denuded lands are the two distinctive components of the program, successful implementation of which may bring about economic uplift of the population in the watershed (meaning an area having a common drainage point) through formation of self-help group, user group for carrying out various activities related to agriculture, horticulture, fisheries etc, and through cottage industries based on locally available resources. However, wasteland encompasses various other kinds of land like saline, waterlogged etc which may also be developed under various programs governed by the common guidelines of Watershed Development Program. The project for Darjeeling is being revised.<sup>24</sup> Wasteland Development Program as of now is not implemented in Darjeeling.<sup>25</sup>

A watershed is a geographic area that drains to a common point, which makes it an ideal planning unit for conservation of soil and water. A watershed may comprise one or several villages, contain both arable and non-arable lands, various categories of land-holdings and farmers whose actions may impact on each other's interests. The watershed approach enables a holistic development of agriculture and allied activities in the area taking into account various kinds of land-use based on crops, horticulture, agro-forestry, silvi-pasture and forests. Watershed-based interventions have led to increases in

groundwater recharge, increase in number of wells and water bodies, enhancement of cropping intensity, change in cropping pattern, higher yields of crops and reduction in soil losses. While there were major visible gains, the problem of sustainability continued to plague the first generation watershed development projects as evidenced by the unwillingness of local communities to operate and maintain completed structures and plantations on community property. The beneficiaries were too often merely passive recipients rather than active participants in the development of their watershed. The restructured, second generation, watershed projects have kept people's participation at center-stage.<sup>26</sup>

### **Funding Pattern**

NWDPR is funded by Central and State Government in the ratio 90:10.<sup>27</sup> (The projects are grant-cum-loan projects sanctioned by NABARD.<sup>28</sup>)

### **Objectives / Purposes**

Conservation, development and sustainable management of natural resources including their use; Enhancement of agricultural productivity and production in a sustainable manner; Restoration of ecological balance in the degraded and fragile rain fed eco-systems by greening these areas through appropriate mix of trees, shrubs and grasses; Reduction in regional disparity between irrigated and rain fed areas; Creation of sustained employment opportunities for the rural community including the landless.<sup>29</sup>

### **Target Group**

Final selection of villages may be conducted in an objective manner by following these parameters for the watershed village: Severity of land degradation; Location in upper reaches of watershed; Lack of earlier investment through any other watershed development project, in the village; Significant proportion of arable land under private cultivation (preferably 50% or more); Pre-ponderance of resource poor, SC/ST; Willingness of community to participate and contribute in the program and take up responsibility of post project maintenance of the created assets.<sup>30</sup>

Tentative list of items to be considered before final selection of the village are: Willingness to manage watershed program through a separate Watershed Association/ Watershed Committee after its registration under the society registration act; Willingness to implement the project by people themselves without any contractor; Willingness to maintain all records properly and own the audit responsibility for the developmental funds to be released under the project to the proposed registered society; Willingness to pay contribution for individual as well as community works as per the guidelines; Willingness to operate revolving fund for improving farm production system (of landless families) through organized User Groups/ Self Help Groups; Willingness to maintain community structures to be created under the project by panchayat in the event of the Watershed Association/ Watershed Committee fail to maintain it; Willingness to operationalize social fencing (ban on free grazing, and on unauthorized cutting of trees) for development of common land/ Forest land, and also allocation of usufruct over the perennial vegetation from these land in favor of resource poor families and women Self-Help-Groups to promote equity; Willingness to contribute for implementation of entry point activity as well as development of common land resource; Willingness to cooperate with Project Implement Agency/ Watershed Development Team for organizing the community into Self Help Groups, User Groups, Watershed Association, Watershed Committee and for carrying out Participatory Rural Appraisal exercises for preparation of watershed plan; Identification of appropriate office bearers of Watershed Association/ Watershed Committee who are local residents, capable, respected and non political.<sup>31</sup>

## 7. Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi

(Under DGHC)

### Concept

For various constraints all the children of state did not get opportunity to go to the primary schools or many of them dropped out after having registered there. The situation had to be rectified in order to achieve the cherished goal of universalization of primary education. Demand for education also went up after Total Literacy Campaign was successfully launched in the State in the early nineties. But the demand for education

could not be fully and effectively met with formal primary education systems. At the same time, it was almost-impossible to open primary schools at every nook and corner of the state wherever there were some children not having access to the school.

### **Objectives/Purposes**

Therefore, the Government of West Bengal decided to introduce an alternative elementary education system in West Bengal, which could reach any corner of the state, cater to the special needs of the children, less costly, but qualitatively comparable with the formal education system. In 1997-98 the Education department, Government of West Bengal, took up such a program and planned to set up about 1000 Child Education Centres, with the help of Panchayati Raj bodies. Subsequently the program was transferred to the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development, Government of West Bengal, which took up the program as Shishhu Shiksha Karmasuchi, and decided to set up the Shishu Shiksha Kendras (SSK), wherever there were at least twenty children not having access to any existing primary school or required some special dispensation, which were not available in the formal primary schools.

[Other essential features of the Karmasuchi are:

- Shishu Shiksha Kendras are opened at the initiative of the community and are owned and managed by them.
- Funds are provided by the State Government and Panchayats act as facilitators only.
- It is a demand driven program; Kendras can be opened in school-less villages or village with schools which have inadequate infrastructures (in terms of space and teachers)
- Curriculum and syllabus as prescribed by the West Bengal Board of Primary Education
- Textbooks as prescribed for the formal primary schools.
- Classroom transaction on the principles of Joyful Learning.]<sup>32</sup>

### **Target Group**

BPL children between 5-9 years not having access to (formal) primary education.

## **8. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**

(Under DGHC)

### **Concept**

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an effort to universalize elementary education by community-ownership of the school system. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country. The SSA program is also an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving human capabilities to all children, through provision of community-owned quality education in a mission mode. The National Program for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day-Meal) would remain a distinct intervention with food-grains and specified transportation costs being met by the Centre and the cost of cooked meals being met by the State government.<sup>33</sup>

### **Funding Pattern**

The assistance under the program of SSA will be on a 85:15 sharing arrangement during the IX Plan, 75:25 sharing arrangement during the X Plan, and 50:50 sharing thereafter between the Central Government and State Governments.<sup>34</sup>

### **Target Groups and Objectives**

The SSA is to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in the 6 to 14 age group by 2010. There is also another goal to bridge social, regional and gender gaps, with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. Useful and relevant education signifies a quest for an education system that is not alienating and that draws on community solidarity. Its aim is to allow children to learn about and master their natural environment in a manner that allows the fullest harnessing of their human potential both spiritually and materially. This quest must also be a process of value based learning that allows children an opportunity to work for each other's well being rather than to permit mere selfish pursuits. SSA realizes the importance of Early Childhood Care and Education and looks at the 10-14 age as a continuum. All efforts to support pre-school learning in ICDS centers or special pre-school centers in non ICDS areas will be made to supplement the efforts being made by the Department of Women and Child Development.<sup>35</sup>

## 9. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

(Under DGHC)

### Concept

The roadwork under the PMGSY forms part of the core network – the minimal network of roads to provide basic access to essential social economic services to all eligible habitations through at least single all-weather road connectivity. PMGSY covers only the rural roads that are roads that were formerly classified as Other District Roads (ODR) and Village Roads (VR). An all-weather road is one which is negotiable during all weathers. This implies that the roadbed is drained effectively by adequate cross-drainage structures such as culverts, minor bridges and causeways.<sup>36</sup>

The roads constructed under this program are expected to be of very high standard, requiring no major repairs for at least five years after completion of construction. The rural roads constructed under PMGSY must meet the technical specifications of the Indian Roads Congress. The Executive Agency may be the Public Works Department/ Rural Engineering Service/ Rural Works Department/ Zilla Parishad/ Panchayati Raj Engineering Department etc. who have been in existence for many years and have the necessary experience, expertise and manpower for constructing the rural roads.<sup>37</sup>

### Funding Pattern

The Government of India launched the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana as a 100 percent centrally sponsored scheme from 2000-2001.<sup>38</sup>

### Objectives / Purposes and Target Group

The purpose of PMGSY is to construct/upgrade village roads and connect all major habitations by all-weather roads by 2007. PMGSY aims to provide good all-weather road connectivity to the unconnected habitations in rural areas by way of an all-weather road with necessary culverts and cross-drainage structures, operable throughout the year. An unconnected habitation means its location is at a distance of at least 500 metres or more from an all-weather road or a connected habitation. A habitation is not a

revenue village or a panchayat. It means cluster of population, living in an area, the location of which does not change over time. The population of all habitations within a radius of 500 metres (1.5 km, of path distance in case of Hills) may be clubbed together for the purpose of determining the population size.<sup>39</sup>

## **10. Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)**

(Under DGHC)

### **Concept**

Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) is provided for implementation of schemes for development of infrastructure in rural areas with loan assistance from NABARD to the extent of up to 90% of the total project cost and state budget support for the remaining 10%. The program was introduced in 1995-96 and has been hitherto implemented by the Finance Department as the Nodal Department. As per revised guidelines of RIDF issued on 12.11.1999, the subsequent phases of the program have been decided to be implemented by this Department as the administrative department though the Finance Department continues to be Nodal Department.<sup>40</sup>

### **Objectives / Purposes**

Loans under RIDF are extended for medium and minor Irrigation Projects, Watershed Management, Soil Conservation, Rural Roads and Bridges, tube wells, Rural Market Yards, Rural Go-downs and Cold Storage chains. RIDF makes financial resources available to state Government for rural infrastructure projects and accelerates employment opportunities and production in rural areas.<sup>41</sup>

### **Target Group**

Loans are extended to cover Gram Panchayats, Self-help groups and certain other institutions like NGOs. Project with gestation period of 2-3 years are given priority.<sup>42</sup>

## **11. Provident Fund for Landless Agricultural Laborers (PROFLAL)**

(Under District Administration)

### **Concept and Objective**

The scheme was introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1998 for all landless agricultural laborers of the state within the age group of 18 to 50 years. All eligible subscribers to this scheme will have to deposit Rs. 10 per month and the State Government, will contribute an equal amount till such time the subscribers attains the age of fifty years. On the Subscribers attaining fifty years the accumulated sum along with the interest shall be paid to the Subscribers, if for some reason the subscriber does not find it possible to continue with the scheme the amount saved by him along with the matching contribution of the State Government against the amount saved by him are refunded to the subscriber concerned within six months of the closure of the account. The Scheme is administered by the Gram Panchayats at the village level. The Block Development Officer and the District Magistrate concerned have supporting role in implementing the Scheme. Owing to some initial obstacles, non-availability of forms etc the Scheme could not really take off well.<sup>43</sup>

### **Target Group**

The beneficiaries are from the age group of 18 to 50 years, who are mainly farmers, having their own land not exceeding 50 decimals in area and whose source of income/earning (and the earnings of his family members taken together) are derived from work as agricultural labors.<sup>44</sup>

## **12. Border Area Development Program (BADP)**

(Under District Administration)

### **Concept**

Border Area Development Program (BADP) was started with the twin objectives of balanced development of sensitive border areas through adequate provision of infrastructural facilities and promotion of a sense of security amongst the local population. The nature of the Program has changed from a schematic program with emphasis on education to a State level Program with emphasis on balanced development

of Border areas. Schemes should be designed to take care of the special problems faced by people living in the border areas. Grassroots institutions such as Panchayat Raj Institutions and District Councils should be involved in identification of the priority areas to the maximum extent possible. Since the people living in the border areas must have a direct say in the selection of the schemes, village level institutions such as Gram Sabha should be involved in the decision making process. Appropriate modalities may be worked out by the State Government to ensure greater participation of the people of the border areas in the selection of schemes under the Program. Schemes which address problems such as inadequacies relating to provision of essential needs, strengthening of the social infrastructure, filling up of critical gaps in the road network etc may be taken up under the programs. Emphasis must be laid on schemes for employment generation, production oriented activities and schemes which provided for critical inputs in the social sector.<sup>45</sup>

### **Funding Pattern**

The Border Area Development Program is 100% centrally funded area program. Funds will be provided to the states as Special Central Assistance for execution of approved schemes on a 100% grant basis and allotted on the basis of (1) length of international border, (2) population of border blocks and (3) area of border blocks. Each of these criteria will be given equal weight age.<sup>46</sup>

### **Objectives**

The main objective of the Program will be to meet the special needs of the people living in remote, inaccessible areas situated near the border.<sup>47</sup> The work under this program is executed mainly for development of border roads, bridges, culverts, educational institutions, health infrastructure, rural electrification, relief centers etc.

### **Target Groups**

BADP covers sixteen states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.<sup>48</sup>

In DGHC areas BADP covers development work in border areas like Sukhia-Pokhri (Indo-Nepal border) and Gorubathan (Indo-Bhutan border), which are in rural areas.

## **Rural-cum-Urban Development Programs**

### **1. National Social Assistance Program**

#### **Concept**

The National Social Assistance Program meant for the poorest people of the society, introduces a National Policy for social assistance to poor households. The Program represents a significant step towards the fulfillment of the Directive Principles in Articles 41 and 42 of the Constitution. The NSAP provides opportunities for linking the social assistance package to schemes for poverty alleviation and the provision of basic needs. Old Age Pensions can be linked to medical and other benefits for the old and the poor.<sup>49</sup>

The NSAP is implemented by the Panchayats and the Municipalities in the delivery of social assistance so as to make it responsive and cost-effective. In the process, the Panchayats and the Municipalities will be strengthened and it may be possible for them to mobilize local resources for supplementing benefits from the Government.<sup>50</sup>

#### **Funding Pattern**

The NSAP is a Centrally Sponsored Program to extend 100 per cent Central assistance to the States. The NSAP has three components:

(a) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS). The amount of old-age pension is Rs75/- per month as central assistance, which is supplemented by Rs. 25 from State budget (total Rs100/-) per month.

(b) National Family Benefits Scheme (NFBS) Rs10,000/- in case of death of the primary breadwinner to the bereaved household

(c) National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) Rs500/- per pregnancy upto the first two live births.

In the rural areas NOAPS and NFBS are implemented by Panchayat & Rural Development Directorate and the NMBS by the Health and Family Welfare Department.<sup>51</sup> In DGHC area NOAPS and NFBS are implemented by the Panchayat and Rural Development Office under District Administration and NMBS by the Health and Family Welfare Department under DGHC.

### **Objectives / Purposes and Target Group**

#### **(a) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)**

(Under District Administration and Municipality)

Central assistance under the NSAP will be available for old age pensions provided: the age of the applicant (male or female) shall be 65 years or higher, the applicant must be a destitute in the sense of having little or no regular sources of income or through financial support from family members or other sources.<sup>52</sup> [The amount of old-age pension is Rs. 75 per month as central assistance, which is supplemented by Rs. 25 from state budget (total Rs.100) per month.]

#### **Annapurna Scheme**

Those who are below poverty line and those who could not be covered under National Old Age Pension were given 10 K.G. of rice a month free of cost through public distribution system.<sup>53</sup>

#### **Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)**

Families who belong to poverty line were provided 17.5 K.G. rice and wheat a month at subsidized rate that is Rs.3 and Rs.2 per K.G. respectively, through public distribution system.<sup>54</sup>

#### **(b) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)**

(Under District Administration and Municipality)

The primary breadwinner will be the member of the household – male or female – whose earnings contribute the largest proportion to the total household income; the death

of such a primary breadwinner should have occurred whilst he or she is in the age group of 18 to 64 years that is more than 18 years and less than 65 years of age; the bereaved household qualifies as one below the poverty line according to the criterion prescribed by the Government of India. For the purpose of the Scheme, the term household would include spouse, minor children, unmarried daughters and dependent parents.<sup>55</sup> (The scheme provides one time financial assistance Rs. 10,000 to a family which has lost its prime breadwinner.)

### **(c) National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS)**

(Under DGHC and Municipality)

The maternity benefit will provide a lump sum cash assistance to woman of households below the poverty line. The maternity benefit will be restricted to pregnant women for upto the first two live births provided they are of 19 years of age and above; the beneficiary should belong to a household below the poverty line according to the criteria prescribed by the Government of India; the ceiling on the amount of the benefit for purposes of claiming Central assistance will be Rs. 500/-; the maternity benefit will be disbursed in one installment 12-8 weeks prior to the delivery. It is desirable that the child receives one dose of oral polio and BCG vaccination at birth and the first dose of DPT and polio in the sixth week.<sup>56</sup>

## **2. Member of Parliament Local Area Development Schemes (MPLADS)**

(Under District Administration)

### **Concept and Target Group**

The Members of Parliament (MP) are approached by their constituents, quite often, for small-works of capital nature to be done in their constituencies. Hence there was a demand made by the MPs that they should be allowed to recommend works in their constituencies. Considering these suggestions, the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) was announced in the Parliament on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1993. Under the scheme, each MP has a choice to suggest to the concerned District

Collector, developmental works based on locally felt-needs. In the initial years, each MP could suggest works to the tune of Rupees One Crore per year. Realizing the usefulness of the scheme this amount was being raised from Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 2 crore from the financial year 1998-1999.<sup>57</sup> (Ideally it would be desirable that the MPs suggest individual works costing not more than Rs. 10 Lakhs per work. However, the limit should not be too rigidly construed.)

In identifying and selecting works and giving administrative sanction, the Head of the district should invariably get the concurrence of the Member of Parliament. Normally, the advice of the MP should prevail unless it is for technical reasons. Implementing agencies can be either Government or Panchayati Raj Institutions or any other reputed non-governmental organization. Works under this scheme are implemented by different Government agencies such as PWD, Rural Development, Irrigation, Agriculture, Health, Education, Area Development Authorities, Water Supply and Sewerage Boards, Housing Corporation etc.<sup>58</sup>

### **Funding Pattern**

The fund is released by the Department of Statistics and Program Implementation, Ministry of Planning & Program Implementation will be done four times a year on the basis of the physical and financial progress of the works under implementation and further requirement of funds for works.<sup>59</sup>

### **Objectives**

A variety of works have been taken up under the scheme which has contributed to the well being of the general public. Some very good works like construction of school buildings, community halls, library buildings, roads, culverts/bridges, public irrigation, public drainage facilities, public toilets/ bathrooms, bus stops for public transport, level crossing at unmanned Railway crossing, veterinary aid centers, hospital buildings/equipments, drinking water facilities, ambulances for Government hospitals and reputed service organizations, installation of computers in Government and Government aided schools have been taken up under the scheme for the benefit of the common people.<sup>60</sup>

### 3. Bidhayak Elaka Unnayan Prakalpa (BEUP)

(Under DGHC)

#### Concept and Target Group

The Government of West Bengal introduced 'Bidayak Elaka Unnayan Prakalpa' (BEUP) in the financial year 2000-2001 where for every member of Legislative Assembly of the State a sum of Rs. 15 Lakh was provided for that year. In the year 2001-2002 this amount has been increased to Rs. 25 Lakh. With this fund the Member of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are to formulate developmental schemes for their constituency areas in accordance with the guidelines formulated. With a view to ensuring consistency with the overall District Plan and also to avoid duplication, such schemes will be sent to the Secretary of the concerned District Planning Committee for consultation and sanction of the fund by the said Committee. For constituencies falling under DGHC area the MLAs will recommend schemes and send them to the Secretary, Hill Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal.<sup>61</sup>

#### Funding Pattern

The fund for this program comes entirely from the State Government.<sup>62</sup> For constituencies falling under the DGHC areas the fund will be placed with the DGHC. The DGHC will maintain MLA-wise and constituency-wise separate accounts of fund and intimate the concerned MLAs and the Sanctioning Authorities when funds are credited to and debited from these accounts.<sup>63</sup>

#### Objectives

The MLAs are entitled to recommend schemes for Rs. 25 lakh for each financial year for their respective constituency area during the tenure of their membership of the Legislative Assembly. The works under this Prakalpa shall be developmental in nature based on locally felt-needs. The emphasis would be on creation of durable assets. The funds may also be used for provisions for service support facilities. The MLAs will recommend developmental schemes for their constituencies in conformity with the overall priority fixed for the district under the District Plan by the respective District

Planning Committee. The schemes should not be solely for the benefit of private institutions and individuals.<sup>64</sup>

#### **4. Special Central Assistance Fund**

(Under District Administration)

##### **Concept**

The Governor sanctions the expenditure of certain amount of money (Rs. Two crore was sanctioned in 2003) for implementation of different schemes of the non-transferred Departments in the hill areas of Darjeeling district. The allotment is placed at the disposal of the District Magistrate. The approved schemes are implemented only through the Governmental agencies/departments.<sup>65</sup>

##### **Objectives/Purposes**

From the Special Central Assistance Fund socially and economically viable assets like Schools and Bridges are built in urban and rural areas.<sup>66</sup>

#### **5. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)**

(Under District Administration)

##### **Concept - Funding Pattern – Target Group**

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is a unique early childhood program, centrally sponsored run by the state government through Anganwadi Centres with the objective to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age group 0-6 years along with several other benefits.<sup>67</sup>

The packages of services offered under ICDS are: (1) Supplementary Nutrition (2) Immunization (3) Health Check-ups (4) Referral services (5) Nutritional Health education (6) Non-Formal pre-school education. The basic health services provided within the purview of the ICDS schemes are: (1) Pre-natal and Post-natal care for mothers (2) Immunization for new-borns (3) Regular check-up of Height to Weight Ratio for effective Growth Monitoring of the children (4) Detection of Anemia and other

related diseases for mothers (5) Advocacy on Prevention of Low Birth Weight Babies (6) Stress on Institutional Deliveries (7) Prevention of disabilities. The nutritional services include (1) Nutritional and Health Education through regular mothers' meeting and home visits (2) Supplementary Nutrition through on-the-spot feeding and take Home Rations for children from 6 months to 3 years. The mothers' meetings and home visits are major tools for regular monitoring of the Health and Nutritional status of the beneficiaries. The Anganwadi Workers sit with the mothers regularly and make them aware of various Nutritional aspects so as to enable them to prevent their children from being severely or moderately malnourished. The Anganwadi Workers regularly demonstrate various recipes of food items of high nutritive values, consistent with the local food habits.<sup>68</sup>

### **Objectives/ Purposes**

The major objectives of the scheme are: (1) To improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age group of 0 to 6 years (2) To lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social developments of children (3) To reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout (4) To bring about effective co-ordination in the work of various agencies involved in child development programs (5) To enhance the mother's capabilities to take care of the nutritional needs of her children.<sup>69</sup>

## **6. Development Schemes for Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes/ Other Backward Classes**

(Under DGHC and District Administration)

The Backward Classes Welfare Department under DGHC looks after the Educational schemes for upliftment of Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe students. A package of Educational Schemes have been adopted by the State/Central Government to help the poor Scheduled Tribe/ Scheduled Castes students to acquire education in both Pre-matric and Post-matric stages (Medical/Engineering/Degree level/Diplomacy courses). The object of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to the poor SC/ST students (special financial assistance is also provided to meritorious SC/ST students), so

that they are not faced by any financial problem while studying both Pre-matric and Post-matric stages.<sup>70</sup>

The Backward Classes Welfare Department executes various development schemes, for the up-liftment of the poor Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe people, like construction of Roads, Bridges and Culverts, Drinking water supply schemes, Community halls, Cluster villages etc under Special Central Assistance to Special Component Plan and to Tribal sub-Plan and Article 275(i) of the Indian Constitution. (Integrated Tribal Development Projects in Tribal concentrated areas). This department under DGHC also deals with Other Backward Classes loan Schemes.<sup>71</sup> However, the loan Schemes for the Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe are dealt by the SC/ST Development and Finance Corporation that comes under district administration.

The West Bengal SC/ST Development and Finance Corporation undertake the task of economic welfare of the members of SC/ST through industrial, commercial and other activities. The Corporation will provide financial assistance by way of providing subsidy, margin money and bank loan through the banks to eligible SC/ST entrepreneurs, individuals, partnership concerns, co-operative societies etc for promoting income generation/ self employment schemes in areas like agriculture, animal husbandry, fishery, cottage industries, transport, trades and business etc in commercially viable schemes.<sup>72</sup>

The main activities of the Corporation are: \_

- Special Component Plan for Scheduled Caste and Tribal sub-Plan for Scheduled Tribe. The annual family income (for the eligible loan applicant) must be below the Poverty Line, the age limit between 18-50 years. The maximum project cost is Rs. 35,000/- Subsidy will be 50% of project cost.
- National Scheduled Caste Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) and National Scheduled Tribe Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC). The annual family income (for the eligible loan applicant) must be below double the Poverty Line, the age limit between 18-50 years. The project cost is Rs. 30 lakhs for NSFDC and Rs. 10 Lakhs for NSTFDC. Subsidy is upto Rs. 10,000.
- Mahila Samridhi Yojana is applicable to Scheduled Caste Women only. The project cost is upto Rs. 25,000 and subsidy 50% of the Project cost. The rate of interest is 3% per annum.

- Adibasi Mahila Swasaktikaran Yojana is applicable to Scheduled Tribe women only. The project cost is upto Rs. 50,000 and subsidy 50%. The rate of interest is 3% per annum.
- Micro Credit. The eligibility criteria are similar to National Scheduled Caste Finance and Development Corporation Scheme. The project cost is upto Rs. 25,000 and rate of interest 4% per annum.
- National Scheme for Liberation and Rehabilitation of Safai Karmachari (NSLRS). Any person of any community engaged in the profession of sweeper or scavenger including his family member or dependent are eligible. Age limit is between 18-55 years. Project cost is Rs. 50,000 and subsidy 50% of the project cost.
- National Safai Karmachari Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC). The scheme applies to safai karmacharis and their dependents. There is no caste bar or income limit. The project cost is upto Rs. 5 Lakhs and the loan upto 90% of the project cost. Remaining 10% is provided by margin money loan and subsidy.<sup>73</sup>

### **Urban Development Programs**

#### **1 Swarna Jayanti Sahari Rojgar Yojana (SJSRY)**

(Under Municipality)

SJSRY came into effect from 1997 replacing the earlier Nehru Yozgar Yojana (NRY) and Prime Minister Integrative Urban Poverty Eradication Program (PMIUPEP).<sup>74</sup>

#### **Funding Pattern**

SJSRY is Central Government sponsored poverty alleviation program, with the resources being shared on 75:25 bases between Centre and the States.

There are three components under SJSRY. These are (a) Urban Self-Employment (Micro Enterprise) (b) Skill Development (Vocational Training) and (c) Urban Wage Employment.<sup>75</sup>

#### **(a) Urban Self-Employment Program (USEP)**

### **Concept**

The program will be applicable to all urban towns in India and will be implemented on a whole town basis with special emphasis on urban poor clusters. Assistance is provided to urban poor beneficiaries for setting up gainful self-employment ventures and to groups of urban poor women for setting up gainful self-employment ventures (DWCUA). Training of beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries and other persons associated with the urban employment program for up-gradation and acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills.<sup>76</sup>

### **Objectives / Purpose**

To provide assistance to individual urban poor beneficiaries for setting up gainful self-employment ventures; Assistance to groups of urban poor women for setting up gainful self-employment ventures; Training of beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries and other persons associated with the urban employment program for up gradation and acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills.<sup>77</sup>

Under this scheme eligible beneficiary would be provided a loan through commercial bank for setting up gainful self-employment ventures. Maximum loan ceiling under this scheme is Rs.50,000/-. A maximum of Rs.7,500/- or 15% of the total project cost is provided by the Urban Local Body.<sup>78</sup>

### **Target Group**

The program shall target the urban poor, defined as those living below the urban poverty line, as defined from time to time. Special attention will be given to women, persons belonging to SC/ST, disabled persons and other such categories as may be indicated by the Government from time to time. No minimum educational qualification for beneficiaries. However, this scheme shall not apply to beneficiaries educated beyond the IX standard. Non-economic parameters will also be applied to identify the urban poor in addition to the economic criteria of the urban poverty line.<sup>79</sup>

### **Development of Women and Children in Urban Areas (DWCUA)**

Development of Women and Children in Urban Areas (DWCUA) is a sub-scheme of Urban Self Employment Program (USEP). At least 10 urban poor women of the identified poor families, who know each other and are aware of their potentials, have formed a group who have decided to set up self employment ventures, in a group, it has an organizer from amongst them. The group has decided to take up an appropriate economic activity jointly that would suit their skill, training, aptitude and local response and conditions of market. The group has prepared and submitted a scheme for the purpose which has been considered by the Urban Poverty Eradication (UPE) Cell to be reasonably visible. The group has ensured necessary pre-conditions of space, power, business contacts etc. for implementation of the scheme and may have initiated some activities with own resources being mobilized. The group has taken steps to form a thrift-cum-credit society.<sup>80</sup>

#### **(b) Urban Skill Development Program (USDP)**

##### **Concept**

This program encourages under employed and unemployed urban youth to set up small enterprises relating to servicing, petty business and manufacturing, for which there is a lot of potential in urban areas. Local skills and local crafts are encouraged for this purpose. Each town had to develop a compendium of such projects/activities keeping in view cost, marketability, economic viability etc. [Trades like Beautician, Cutting and Tailoring, T.V.Mechanic, Wireman, Fabric Painting, Soft Toys Making, Tourist Guide, Watch Repairing, Motor Driving] This program is confined to low poverty line beneficiaries who have got education up to ninth standard with emphasis on those given a higher priority on the basis of the non-economic criteria.<sup>81</sup>

##### **Objectives / Purpose**

The Program aims at developing the skill of urban poor people living below poverty line (BPL) for gainful employment or self-employment and creation of better employment opportunities for underemployed poor people.<sup>82</sup>

### **Target Group**

Persons of identified poor families preferably in the age group of 18 to 35 years, capable of setting up self employment ventures or become wage earners through various services oriented activities, trades etc.<sup>83</sup>

### **(c) Urban Wage Employment Program (UWEP)**

#### **Objectives/ Purpose**

Socially and economically useful public assets are created under this scheme like Latrines, Water Taps, Sewerage, Storm water Drains, Community Baths, Widening and paving of existing lanes, Street Lights, Community parks and playgrounds, Community centers particularly suited to women and children, Covered structures for running health clinics, ICSD center etc, and Tube well platforms with drains.<sup>84</sup>

#### **Target Group**

Population below poverty line as redefined under SJSRY.<sup>85</sup>

## **2 Basic Minimum Service in Urban Areas**

(Under Municipality)

#### **Objectives/Purpose**

(1) Making provision for safe drinking water. Schemes to be taken up might include installation of head works (tube wells with pumps etc) extension of existing water supply network, installation of new stand posts, provision of spot sources ecetra. (2) Making provisions of connectivity to all habitations (with special reference to slum areas). Both new construction activities and strengthening up-gradations of existing roads could be undertaken. The schemes must benefit the poor residing at identified low-income areas and slum areas. In slum area, brick-paved roads may be taken up for construction. (3) Public housing assistances to all shelter less poor families. Dwelling units with low costs specifications could be constructed. Identified beneficiaries should

have proper title in respect of the land. Alternatively, the concerned Urban Local Bodies or District Magistrate would issue certificates to the effect that the beneficiaries have been residing at the site for at least 15 years and that there is no plan to shift them elsewhere. (4) Universalization of Primary Education. Activities to be undertaken will include construction of school buildings and additional classrooms supply of teaching equipments and furniture to primary schools, provision of toilets at girls' schools, construction of compound wells at primary schools and making provision of drinking water at primary schools.<sup>86</sup>

### **3 National Slum Development Program and Special Central Assistance to states for Slum Development** (Under Municipality)

#### **Concept**

The Constitution 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act, 1992 envisages a critical role for elected municipal governments in the provision of basic services to their residents. The Act incorporates a 12<sup>th</sup> Schedule containing an illustrative list of municipal function. Slum improvement, slum up-gradation, and urban poverty alleviation are considered as legitimate functions of the municipal authorities. These functions, requiring local knowledge and active participation by local communities, can be best handled at the local level, with necessary support from the Central and State Governments. Experience shows that virtually none of the State Governments have been able to provide sufficient funds for the scheme as a result of which there has not been much improvement and up-gradation work in urban slums. It is therefore, considered appropriate for the Government of India to introduce a Special Central Assistance to States for up-gradation of urban slums.<sup>87</sup>

#### **Objectives/Purposes**

Provision of physical amenities like water supply, storm water drains, community bath widening and paving of existing lanes, sewers, community latrines, street lights, etc. community infrastructure like provision of community centers to be used for pre-school

education, non-formal education, adult education, recreational activities, etc. Community primary health care center buildings can be provided. Social amenities like pre-school education, non-formal education, adult education, maternity child health and primary health care including immunization. Provision for shelter, the scheme must have up-gradation or construction of new houses as may be required.<sup>88</sup>

Any type of developmental work can be taken up in the Urban Slum Areas to benefit the slum dwellers. Such work include construction and up-gradation of roads providing street light facilities ect but not routine maintenance.

### **Target Group**

The scheme is applicable to all States having urban population and funds are allotted on the basis of urban slum population.<sup>89</sup>

Analysis

**Table II**  
**Rural Development Programs**

Under District Administration	Under DGHC
(i) PROFLAL (ii) BAD	(i) SGSY (ii) SGRY (iii) IAY (iv) PMGY (v) PMGSY (vi) RIDF (vii) NWDPRRA (viii) Swajal Dhara

**Table III**  
**Rural cum Urban Development Programs**

Under District Administration	Under DGHC
(i) MPLADs (ii) SCAF (iii) Loans for SC/ST (iv) NSAP (a) NOAPS (b) NFBS	(i) BEUP (ii) Loans for OBCs (iii) SC/ST/OBC Development (iv) NSAP (c) NMBS

**Table IV**  
**Urban Development Programs**

<b>Under Municipality</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) NSDP</li> <li>(ii) BMP</li> <li>(iii) SJSRY</li> <li>(a) USEP</li> <li>(b) USDP</li> <li>(c) UWEP</li> </ul>

In Darjeeling Hills most of the Rural Development Programs/Schemes/Projects are under the control of the DGHC, and the District Administration looks after a few. Some rural-cum-urban developmental programs are the responsibility of the DGHC whereas others are the responsibility of the District Administration. However, the Urban Development Programs are solely under the control of the Darjeeling Municipality.

Rural development Programs like Swarna-jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY), Sampurna Gramin Rozgar Yojna (SGRY), India Awaas Yojna (IAY), Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojna (PMGY), Swajal Dhara, Micro Watershed Development Program, Shishu Siksha Karmasuchi/Kendra (SSK), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY) and Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) are under DGHC. However, the District Panchayat and Rural Development Office under District Administration looks after Provident Fund Scheme for Landless Agricultural Laborers (PROFLAL) a rural development program. Border Area Development Program (BADP), in Darjeeling, which covers rural areas, is the responsibility of the District Administration.

Rural Development Program like Rural (Total) Sanitation Program/Campaign and Credit-cum-Subsidy Scheme for Rural Housing, are implemented in other parts of West

Bengal but are not implemented in Darjeeling Hills. However, in November 2005 a local newspaper mentioned that Rural Sanitation Program would be started in the Darjeeling hills and from October 2006 the Rural Sanitation Program was formally inaugurated (Sunachary Samachar 1 November 2006).

Urban Development Programs like National Slum Development Program (NSDP), Basic Minimum Program (BMP) and Swarna Jayanti Swarozgar Yojna (SJSRY) with its three components Urban Self Employment Program (USEP), Urban Skill Development Program (USDP) and Urban Wage Employment Program (UWEP) are under Darjeeling Municipality. Development of Women and Children in Urban Areas (DWCUA) is a sub-scheme of USEP.

There are some rural-cum-urban development programs which are under the control of the District Administration and are implemented both in urban and rural areas like (Member of Parliament Local Area Development Fund) MPLADs, Special Central Assistance Fund, Loans provided to SC/ST for their economic up-liftment from SC/ST Finance Corporation.

National Social Assistance Program (NSAP), another program implemented in both rural and urban areas with its two components, (i) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS) and (ii) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) at one time were transferred to DGHC but were re-transferred to District Panchayat and Rural Development Office under District Administration. The third component of NSAP, that is, the (iii) National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) comes under Health Department which is under DGHC. Similarly, other rural-cum-urban development programs like Bidhayak Elaka Unnayan Prakalpa (BEUP), Community Development Schemes and Educational Schemes for Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes and Loans for Other Backward Classes are under DGHC.

The above facts show that:

- 1) There is a kind of haphazard distribution of development programs between District Administration and DGHC.
- 2) Most of the development works are entrusted to DGHC.

- 3) The District Administration in Darjeeling Hills does some developmental work along with regulatory work.
- 4) DGHC is not the sole development authority performing developmental functions.

To make DGHC a strong development authority/body that it is intended to be, and enhance decentralization, democracy and development, all rural development programs, rural-cum-urban development programs, and urban development programs can be vested in DGHC. This will remove the rural-urban divide and replace it with rural-urban continuum in the field of development, and enhance the process of decentralization, democracy and development.

#### **An Empirical Study covering beneficiaries of these Development Programs.**

Out of the 112 Gram Panchayats (G.P) of the 3 sub-divisions of Darjeeling – Darjeeling Sadar, Kurseong and Kalimpong, 6 Gram Panchayats were selected for study – taking 2 from each sub-division. The selection of Gram Panchayat was purposive – keeping in mind the relative level of development.

From the 6 selected Gram Panchayats, 4 were average Gram Panchayats while 2 were comparatively good Gram Panchayats. The selection was done after talking with the District Panchayat Officer, Block Development Officers, Extension Officers of the Panchayat, Secretaries of the Gram Panchayat and other Staff employed in the Gram Panchayat.

The criteria for an average Gram Panchayat were:- (i) Bad living conditions of village people. (ii) Lack of employment/job opportunities for the villagers (iii) Absence of electricity/telephone facilities. (iv) Inefficiency in the maintenance of the Gram Panchayat Office Records. (v) Incapability of the Panchayat Pradhans (due to lack of education). (vi) Location – Gram Panchayats located in distant/remote areas have less development.

The criteria for a comparatively good Gram Panchayat were:- (i) Good infrastructure like roads, drinking water facility, electricity, telephone, schools, health centers, ICDS centers, community halls etc. (ii) Where village people were engaged in agriculture or village related occupation.

Reiling G.P.(in Darjeeling sub-division) had once been declared as the 'Best Gram Panchayat', while in Rongchong G.P.(also in Darjeeling sub-division) inhabitants were facing unemployment and hardship due to the closure of the Cinchona Factory. Mahanadi G.P.(in Kurseong sub-division) was another example of a good G.P.while St. Mary's G.P.(also in Kurseong sub-division) was an example of an average G.P. adjoining a Municipal area. Today Tangta G.P.(in Kalimpong sub-division) situated at Indo Bhutan Border was an example of a border area G.P. with 40 per cent Scheduled Tribe population and Teesta G.P. (also in Kalimpong sub-division) was an example of an average G.P. with large number of BPL members and with large number of Scheduled Caste Members. A random sample of beneficiaries from these selected G.P.s were interviewed and the following information was derived:

Table IV

Distribution of the Respondents (B.P.L. Beneficiaries) in the 6 Gram Panchayats of DGHC areas in Darjeeling.

Gram Panchayats:	Reiling		Rong-chong		Maha-nadi		St. Mary's		Teesta		Today-Tangta	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Total Beneficiaries:	8	12	6	12	4	6	8	9	10	10	7	10
Below 40 years	3	9	5	7	1	5	2	5	4	4	3	5
Above 40 years	5	3	1	5	3	1	6	4	6	6	4	5
1) Ethnicity:												
Bhutia											3	
Gorkhali/Nepali	8	12	6	11	4	6	8	9	9	10	2	7
Lepcha				1							2	3
Sherpa									1			
2) Caste/Category:												
General	2	2		1	1	1		5	4	6		

Scheduled Caste	1					1	2	1	4	4		
Scheduled Tribe	1	5	2	4	3	2	2	3	1		5	4
O.B.C.	4	5	4	7		1	2		1		2	6
Physical Handicap						1	2					
3) Religion:												
Animism		3		3	2							
Buddhism	1	3	2	2		2	1		1	1	3	1
Christianity		1		1			2	4			2	8
Hinduism	7	5	4	6	2	3	5	5	9	9	2	1
Islam						1						
4) Education: No Formal Education	3	3		5	2	2	2	3	6	7	3	3
Primary	1	1	4	2	2		2	3	1		2	2
Middle School	1	5	2	5		2	2	1	1	2	2	
High School	2	3				2	1	2		1		4
Higher Secondary							1					
Graduate	1								2			
Post-Graduate												1
5) Occupation:												
Labor	1	2	5	4	1	1	3	2	5	5		
Small Business		1	1		1	2	1		3	2		
Village Occupation	7	6		2	2		1	1	1		7	5
Teaching												1
Housewife		3		3		3		6		1		4
Unemployed				3			3		1	2		

### **Relling Gram Panchayat in Darjeeling sub-division (example of a good G.P.)**

On the question of development /development programs /development schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries were (i) Roads, pony roads, culverts (ii) Electricity (iii) Tanks for drinking water (iv) Schools (v) ICDS center (vi) Old age pension (vii) Maternity Benefit Schemes (viii) SGSY SHG engaged in various activities like Floriculture, Ginger farming, Mushroom farming, Vegetable (like potato and capsicum) growing and selling, Poultry, Piggary, Fishery, Diary, Catering, Cutting and Tailoring.

[The Gram Panchayat Office supplemented this information: (i) There were 20 active SHGs who had formed a cluster (ii) Above 100 IAY beneficiaries (iii) From SGRY jeepable and pony roads were made, maintenance of a school building was done and provision for drinking water was made (iv) 3 Shishu Shiksha Kendras (v) 2 Madhyamik Shishu Kendras (vi) This gram panchayat had the highest number of people supplying milk to the Diary (Himul) (vii) The gram panchayat was also contemplating on starting Medicinal Plants, Bee-Keeping and a proposal was made to start a Juice (Orange) Factory in the near future. (viii) The villagers were also made aware of doing social work like keeping the village clean, having goodwill and unity in the village, visiting the sick and prohibiting alcoholic drinks. (ix) Just outside the gram panchayat a main road was constructed under PMGSY.]

But there was an area in this gram panchayat which the beneficiaries described as being a sinking area where there were no proper roads, toilets and for drinking water rubber pipes in place of iron pipes were used.

On the question of the purpose/objectives of the Development Programs being fulfilled, most female members were unable to provide an answer whereas the male members were positive that the objectives were fulfilled.

On the question of benefits obtained from development programs the beneficiaries mentioned (i) Material benefits as in the case of old age pension and maternity benefits (ii) Bank loans (iii) Training imparted to the swarojgaries of SHG under SGSY (iv) Knowledge from ideas that the gram panchayat functionaries impart and knowledge of how the panchayat system works (iv) The women beneficiaries mentioned the financial

independence they acquired after starting small business under SGSY, the opportunity to visit other places (like Takdah, Pudung) while undergoing training, the facilities of working in and as a group and the social awareness generated among them.

On the question of being satisfied with the benefits obtained from the development programs most beneficiaries answered in the affirmative.

On the question of difficulties faced by the beneficiaries while enjoying the development programs the beneficiaries answered that at the initial stage of forming SHGs there were teething problems, that banks were far away, some beneficiaries complained of not getting cheque facilities, the market was far away, there was no diary nearby, there was no training center nearby, one's personal money being spent in transport and on other official works (example Xeroxing). Women who had availed of NFMS complained of not getting the money on time when they needed it and that they had got the money late.

On being asked to give suggestions for improvement of the development programs the beneficiaries suggestions were: (i) More money for old age pension (ii) More loans for more people (iii) More health centers to be set up (iv) More Shishu Shiksha Kendras to be set up (v) More meetings to be held for SHGs (vi) SHG training to be open to all villagers. Training building in the village set up. (vi) Holding of Melas to exhibit village products (vii) Vegetable seeds, hybrids etc to be given to the villagers by the authorities (like DGHC) on time (viii) Tree plantations to be done in and around the village (ix) Subsidy for insecticide spraying machine to be provided by the government (x) Scientific knowledge and training on-cultivation to be imparted by the government (xi) Impose ban on plastic (xii) Prohibition on alcohol to be imposed (this was voiced by womenfolk) (xiii) Corruption to be checked (iv) Handicapped people to be given opportunities to form SHGs.

The Researcher's observation: on the day the researcher visited the gram panchayat a cluster meeting of the SHG under SGSY was taking place at the Primary School Hall where the room was jam packed. Most participants were eager and active about the meeting and on doing social work. Most villagers complained of drinking water problem although Water Tanks were visible in the village. The tanks did not contain enough water to satisfy everyone's need. Electricity was there but most had brought

private lines. At times of calamity like landslide the district administration provided relief in the form of tarpaulin and cloths distributed to the people. One suggestion from the respondents was that the administration could order and buy garments made by SHGs for relief distribution.

**Ronchong Gram Panchayat in Darjeeling sub-division (G.P. where people were facing unemployment due to closure of Cinchona Factory)**

On the question of the development and the development programs/schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Pony roads, road repairs and culverts (ii) Electricity there but its provision was bad (iii) Telephone (iv) National Hydel Project (of Centre) (v) SGSY SHGs engaged in making Bamboo Mooras, Orange farming, Broomstick making, Piggary farming, Garment and Vegetable selling, Floriculture (Gladiolas). (vi) SGRY (vii) IAY (viii) Old Age Pension Scheme, National Maternity Benefit Scheme and Widow Pension Scheme (ix) Annapurna and Antodaya Anna Yojna. Many villagers had rendered free labor (shramdan) for making roads inside the village.

[The gram panchayat office informed that (i) there were 18 SHGs under SGSY all of whom were women (ii) There were over 60 IAY beneficiaries (iii) 8 Old Age Pension Scheme beneficiaries, 15 women under NMBS, 3 beneficiaries under NFBS and 1 under Widow Pension Scheme (iv) There were 4 Primary Schools where midday meals were provided to children, 1 Secondary School, 4 Shishu Shiksha Kendras but there was no Madhyamik Shishu Kendra (v) Annapurna and Antodaya Anna Yojna were implemented in this gram panchayat.]

On the question of whether the purposes/objectives of the development programs were fulfilled most beneficiaries were unable to answer though a few answered in the affirmative.

On the question of benefits derived from the development programs the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Wage from working for SGRY Pony road (ii) Tin roof for house under PMGY (iii) IAY construction along with smokeless chula and toilet facilities (iv) Ration Card for BPL (v) Loan facilities for SHGs under SGSY. The womenfolk

mentioned social interaction as a benefit. The closeness that developed among members of the village. There was social improvement in the sense that women were able to come out of their shell. Possessing a bank passbook was also considered a benefit. (vi) Widow pension.

On the question of being satisfied with the development programs most answered in the affirmative.

On the question of the difficulties the beneficiaries encountered while enjoying the development programs the responses were: (i) Teething problems for SHGs, as earlier people were apprehensive about the genuineness of SHGs – they feared it was some kind of fraud chit fund. For women with small children giving time to SHG was a problem. Women beneficiaries under NMBS talked of the long time taken in getting benefits. Instead of receiving money during childbirth they received the money when the child was one year old. Here the objective of the program was not fulfilled for the maternity benefit was not given on time.

Other general difficulties the villagers complained of were the high expense for house construction and up-gradation under IAY. Due to the geographical topography of the region the houses in the village were linked by narrow goat paths – so the expense for house construction was extremely high.

Other difficulties were in not getting loans and some complained of the long time taken to make Tribal Certificates in the Tribal Office.

On being asked to make suggestions for improvement of development programs and overall development of the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Better roads required. More funds required for incomplete roads (ii) Tapping the source of drinking water and keeping a reservoir (iii) Loan to be sanctioned faster (iv) Need of playgrounds for children and football grounds for youths (v) Orange factory to replace Cinchona factory in future (vi) Cold storages built for storing Oranges (vii) Permission to grow bamboos in the area to be granted by the state government (viii) Holding of melas to exhibit village products and SHG products (viii) Library, post office, community halls and residential colony to be set up (ix) Public toilets required in various parts of the village.

Researcher's observation: the biggest problem in this gram panchayat was that of unemployment due to closure of Cinchona factory but the people of the village had hope that Orange cultivation would replace Cinchona cultivation. Villagers were also looking at floriculture as the next alternative.

Due to the topography the houses in this gram panchayat were connected with narrow goat paths. All around the village there were streams and natural springs. The villagers wanted better provisions for getting purer drinking water.

### **Mahanadi Gram Panchayat in Kurseong sub-division**

On the question of development /development programs /development schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries were (i) Road (ii) Water Tap from G.P.Fund (iii) ST Loan (iv) Landslide Relief (v) Funeral Cart.

(vi) SGSY (SHG) Poultry, Fishery, Catering, Pickle Making, Paper Bag Making, Sewing and Knitting and Cloth Dyeing. (vii) SGRY 3% to handicapped individual (viii) IAY Houses (ix) PMGY (x) NOAPS.

[The Gram Panchayat Office supplemented this information.- (i) SGSY 9 SHGs engaged in Poultry, Piggery and Meat Selling and Fishery. (ii) SGRY SC/ST Footpath, Public Toilet, Handicapped individual beneficiaries 6 in number, Utensils for villagers and a room to store them. (iii) IAY Houses new construction and up-gradation – 119 beneficiaries (iv) PMGY Houses new construction and up-gradation – 4 beneficiaries. (v) 20 houses have agreed on starting Swajal Dhara (v) PMGSY Roads around the village (vi) NOAPS – 12 beneficiaries, NFBS – 1 beneficiary, NMBS – no beneficiary in this scheme (vii) ICDS – 1 (viii) Primary Schools 5 where midday meal provided (ix) Fund from 10<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission utilized in maintenance of Gram Panchayat Office.]

On the question of benefits derived from the development programs the response of the beneficiaries were (i) From loan bought Pig, Cow, Goat. (ii) Sold Milk after buying milching Cow. This way able to educate children. (iii) Did catering for a Wedding and earned some money. (iv) SHG s organized exhibition. (v) House constructed and upgraded under IAY. (vi) Learnt to be conscious of protecting the Environment – in keeping the village clean, banning the use of plastic, celebrated Environment Day.

On the question of being satisfied with the development programs the majority response was of being satisfied. One respondent wanted Government to pay 50% subsidy in the repayment of loan and another respondent wanted drain and toilet to be constructed along with the house construction under IAY Program.

On the question of the difficulties, the beneficiaries encountered while enjoying the development programs the majority response was that there were no difficulties. Few respondents expressed inconvenience of the long time taken in SHG meetings. One respondent expressed difficulty in obtaining a Certificate from the Veterinary Doctor for the purpose of loan.

On being asked to make suggestions for improvement of development programs and overall development of the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) In SHGs there must be harmony and unity (ii) More loan for starting small business (iii) Smokeless Chula (oven), toilet and drains to be constructed under IAY (iv) More improved roads (v) Health Centres to be set up (vi) Electricity to be provided (vii) Permission to be given to villagers to collect ground twigs for firewood from forest nearby.

**St. Mary's Gram Panchayat Kurseong (Gram Panchayat adjoining a Municipality)**

On the question of development /development programs /development schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries were (i) Pony roads (ii) Jeepable road (which the villagers wanted to be completed) (iii) Electricity (iv) Health dispensary (v) School (vi) Landslide protection wall (vii) Burning ghat (viii) SGSY SHG doing Catering, Floriculture, Piggary, Vegetable/Garment Selling and planning to take up Cutting and Tailoring, Carpet Weaving in future. (ix) NMBS (x) Normal Grain Relief (to landslide victims of 2005).

The Gram Panchayat Office supplemented this information: (i) SGSY SHG – 5 Active Groups (ii) SGRY – Construction of road with culvert, construction of road with drain, water tank and pipe fixing, burning ghat (iii) IAY – total 60 Houses (new construction and up-gradation) (iv) Swajal Dhara – Government was to provide 20 Lakhs

but 10 % of it that is 2 Lakhs villagers were to provide. Since villagers were poor they were not able to collect 2 Lakhs. So Swajal Dhara could not be enjoyed in this Gram Panchayat. (v) NWDP – Tank constructed on Watershed area (by DGHC) (vi) SSK – 2 (vi) MSK – Nil (vii) PMGSY – Road near this Gram Panchayat (viii) NOAPS – 42 (ix) NFBS – 1 (x) NMBS – 31 beneficiaries between 2002 to 2005, after which the scheme stopped (xi) ICDS – 2 (xii) Besides those who do not get other benefits get Normal Grain Relief (14 Kg of wheat) and Annapurna (10 Kg of rice given to those old BPL people who do not get old age pension) (xiii) Other schemes undertaken by this Gram Panchayat between 2003 to 2005 were construction of protection wall against a landslide in the village, maintenance of foot-paths, construction of road, repair of water tanks, repair of water catchment areas, repair of public drain, culverts and burning ghat. (xiv) From relief work - blankets, sari for women, shirt/pant for children and tarpaulin were provided to villagers.

On the question of benefits derived from the development programs the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Monetary benefits example Old Age Pension (ii) Maternity benefits (iii) House construction and up-gradation under IAY (iv) Loan facility (v) Training facility for example Catering (vi) The Catering group provided its service for weddings and funerals in the village and earned money in the process.

On the question of being satisfied with the development programs the majority response was positive. One respondent thought it was better to get something than nothing at all, while another expressed gratitude at getting help in times of need.

On the question of the difficulties the beneficiaries encountered while enjoying the development programs the response were as follows: (i) Old people found it difficult to walk up and down the hills due to bad foot-paths (ii) Delay in getting maternity benefit – after a couple of months of child birth got benefit when the benefit was to be got at the time of delivery (iii) Long time taken to get IAY money (iv) SGSY SHG faced initial problem of not understanding what SHG was all about (v) For the poor Swarojgaris to pool in money was difficult and opening pass books they said was not easy. However, whenever required the villagers received help from Gram Panchayat Office.

On being asked to make suggestions for improvement of development programs and overall development of the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) In the SHG

there must be trust and unity among members. The members are to follow rules. The group must work hard and continuously without dissolving. Petty disputes can be settled by the SHG. More training can be imparted (ii) With the rise in price old age pension should also rise. Getting Rs.100 a month was very little (iii) In the hills for constructing houses charge was higher. Accordingly IAY beneficiaries be given more money (iv) More people to get benefits from various development programs (v) Make good roads and foot-path in and around village (vi) Provide clean drinking water (although drinking water facility was there due to the proximity of the catchment area and streams around) (vii) Proper drains needed (viii) Street lights like in Municipal areas required (ix) Community Hall (x) ICDS center (xi) Grounds and clubs to be set up by government. Villagers ready to yield their labor (shramdan) for community works (xii) Proper sanitation – proper garbage-dumping ground required. Burning of garbage instead of just dumping them. (xiii) A driver who was a victim of jeep accident, paralyzed from hips downwards but was able to move hips upwards wanted a loan to do something for a living.

Researcher's observation: This gram panchayat lies adjacent to the municipal area and the people enjoy electricity and telephone facilities like in urban areas. In fact this gram panchayat does not look like a village. The people here make comparison of facilities available in the municipal area with their village and are aware of the development or lack of development in their areas. There are a lot of streams around so availability of fresh water is not a problem. Converting the water into safe and pure drinking water is a problem due to poverty of the people. As the region is hilly with pony roads and stony steps villagers complain about the bad state of road.

**Teesta Gram Panchayat in Kalimpong sub-division (G.P. with large number of BPL and SC Members)**

On the question of development /development programs /development schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Road and drain repairs done through MPLAD fund (ii) High School and the school grounds (iii) National Hydro Electric Production Corporation (of the center) (iv) Tourist lodges made by DGHC (v)

Protection wall against landslide (vi) IAY houses – new construction and up-gradation (vii) Old age pension (viii) Annapurna and Normal Grain Relief.

But the people in the village had more complains like: (i) No toilets (ii) Absence of footpaths connecting to houses in remote places (iii) Bad drainage (iv) Bad electricity/light (v) Lack of clean drinking water and in some areas drinking water problem (vi) In some areas houses about to fall due to landslide (v) Water pipes burnt down (vi) In one area which was inhabited by very poor people garbage of the village was dumped there (vii) Absence of small scale industry.

[The gram panchayat office supplemented this information: (i) 16 SHGs under SGSY engaged in Quarry, Grocery, Diary, Piggery and Poultry. In the last two the SHGs were not successful (ii) In IAY there were 21 beneficiaries between 2003 and 2004 (iii) There were 2 Shishu Shiksha Kendras, 2 ICDS centers, 7 Primary Schools and 1 Higher Secondary School (iv) There were 18 beneficiaries enjoying Old Age Pension Scheme, 4 beneficiaries enjoying NFBS but no one got maternity benefit. Similarly other development programs implemented in other gram panchayats like SGRY, PMGY, and Swajal Dhara etc were absent in this gram panchayat. However, some beneficiaries of the village enjoyed schemes like Annapurna and Normal Grain.

The gram panchayat office informed that there was very large number of BPL people the number being 799. Every BPL wanted to be included as beneficiaries of some development program but this was not possible due to limited quota. So in gram sansads too quarrels occurred where the Pradhan and upa-Pradhan were accused of misusing funds. Most BPL wanted to avail of the benefits of IAY. A whole list of BPL people wanting to avail of IAY was prepared (and one such list was even handed over to the Researcher), but since development programs were stalled from the end of 2005 onwards these people have been left frustrated. They expressed bitter disappointment at not being included in the development programs and schemes and were vocal about nothing being done for them.

On the question of benefits derived from the development programs the responses of the beneficiaries were: (i) SHG engaged in small business like poultry and catering. Training was imparted for catering for 14 days at Puduk. (ii) IAY new construction and

up-gradation (iii) Normal Grain (monthly 14 Kg. of wheat is given) and Annapurna (monthly 10Kg. of rice is given) (iv) Victims of landslide got blanket from relief work.

On the question of the difficulties the beneficiaries encountered while enjoying the development programs the response were as follows: (i) House far away in remote area but no connecting road till the house (ii) For houses situated far away from proper roads the carrying charge of house building material was more. (iii) Difficulty in explaining things to uneducated people. The difficulties the illiterate people faced while filing up bank forms or while getting receipts. (iv) Inability to pay back loans (v) The problem of unemployment.

On being asked to make suggestions for improvement of development programs and overall development of the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Good roads required (ii) Good drinking water required (iii) Drains to be kept clean (iv) Planting tree saplings (v) Benefits for handicapped people (vi) No objection certificate (NOC) to be provided by Forest Department and PWD for people living in the forest for years, in order to build houses (vii) Provide some informal education to the people (like adult education) (viii) Melas held for displaying SHG products. Packaging to be made attractive (ix) IAY beneficiaries to utilize the money properly for the purpose for which the money was provided. Some beneficiaries for example used the money for drinking and what little was left was used for building house; as a result the house became sub-standard. Another suggestion was that the IAY houses be uniform in style and coloring to distinguish it from other houses (x) There were a lot of old people who wanted to get old age pension. But due to limited quota they were unable to get this benefit. They questioned how long had they to wait? Did they have to wait till those enjoying the benefits died? Their suggestion was to increase the number of quota (xi) Doing social work like cleaning hospitals, helping with anti-Rabies vaccine, donating money to the sick patients who were poor and preventing flesh trade.

Researcher's observation: The people of this gram panchayat were mostly laborers (coolies) who were engaged in road making and quarry works on the riverbed. The area was prone to landslide and on the day of the researcher's visit a huge Peepal tree had fallen crushing some houses and seriously injuring two persons. Many development programs were not implemented although there were a large number of BPL people who

desperately wanted to avail of the benefits. There were many old people around who wanted to avail of Old Age Pension Schemes but were not getting the benefits due to limited quota in that scheme. With the construction of the new Teesta Bridge the people living around Old Teesta Bridge were adversely affected. Earlier vehicles plying to and forth Darjeeling and Kalimpong or Darjeeling and Gangtok would stop at old Teesta Bridge. So people having restaurants and shops had flourishing business. After the new Teesta Bridge came up vehicles did not stop for food and rest at the Old Teesta Bridge. As a result whatever small business the people had in that area have dried up and former shop owners have been reduced to doing manual labor in order to earn a living. Nevertheless people of the area were full of hope that something would be done for their betterment.

**Today Tangta Gram Panchayat in Kalimpong sub-division (Remote G.P. situated on Indo-Bhutan border with approximately 40% of Scheduled Tribe population)**

On the question of development /development programs /development schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i)SGSY SHG engaged in Diary, Floriculture, Cattle rearing, growing and selling vegetables (like Broccoli, Bean, Capsicum, Cabbage, Cardamom, Ginger, Pea, Tomato, etc) (ii) Natural drinking water facility (iii) Primary and Junior High School (iv) Solar energy facility (v) Playground facility (vi) Farmer's Club would invite agronomists and other experts as resource persons to inform and educate the villagers on cultivation, vegetable growth, cattle rearing, floriculture etc, by using new technology (vii) IAY (viii) NOAPS and NFBS (ix) Swajal Dhara (x) Sarva Shiksha Kendra (xi) ICDS.

Villagers complained that there was no road maintenance; no telephone facilities – land line or mobile phone connections; no electricity – some people had private line connections (the supply of power was bad and unstable); no health center facilities though a health center building was there; no facility for education after primary school.

The condition of one village (Tangta) situated next to Bhutan was even worse compared to the surrounding villages. The villagers there complained of not having good

drinking water facility (unlike other villages in the G.P.); not having electricity, telephone connection and post office; not having a school building – a temporary shift had to serve as school; no health center; no bridge – a damaged suspension (hanging) bridge which was extremely risky for use and during monsoon the village would be cut off and isolated.

[The G.P. Office supplemented this information: (i) SGSY 22 SHGs engaged in Poultry, Gottary, Floriculture and Diary. SHG members were sent for training and workshops (ii) Under SGRY roads were built and rice were distributed (iii) There were 60 to 65 IAY beneficiaries (iv) There was 1 Swajal Dhara Scheme underway (v) There were 2 SSK but no MSK (vi) There was no work done under PMGSY (vii) Under NWDP water tank was built and User's Group formed (viii) Under PROFLAL 22 beneficiaries were formed (ix) Under NOAPS there were 13 beneficiaries, under NFBS there were 3 beneficiaries but NMBS was not implemented (x) Under BADP roads were constructed but were not completed – the black topping on roads were not yet done. Other work done under BADP was drinking water, school and playground (xi) Under MPLADs a Community Hall had been made a long time back; drinking water provision was made in Scheduled Tribe area; playground maintenance was done and kuccha road was made (xii) Under BEUP jeepable road and kuccha road was made (xiii) There were 4 ICDS centers (xiv) Annapurna and Antodaya Schemes were recommended by the G.P. Office but the people had not yet received benefits under these schemes.

The G.P. Office informed that Today Tangta was a remote village, situated on Indo-Bhutan border where 59% of the population were BPL and 40% of the population were Scheduled Tribes. A few years back due to good production of Cardamom the economic condition of the villagers were stable but recently (in 2006) due to virus attack the Cardamom production had gone down, adversely affecting the economy of the village.

The G.P. Office also informed that the biggest problem was of not having telephone connections (landline or mobile). The villagers had educational facilities only upto Junior High School level (till class viii). There were few private schools and missionary schools upto the primary level but education above that were not there. So students had to go to Kalimpong and Darjeeling for further education. A Health Center

building was there but services were not delivered. Bank facilities were not there. A branch Post Office was there but people did not get the facility of a full fledged Post Office.]

On the question of benefits derived from the development programs the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) SGSY – SHGs engaged in Piggary, Floriculture, Diary, Vegetable growing and selling – earned money. Loan facility. Borrowing among members. In addition SHG members got training in Floriculture, Horticulture, Catering, Compost making, Leadership and Motivation. They learnt money management (budget) and idea of saving. Some said they gained confidence through social interaction and by participating in Motivation Camps. They gained consciousness for self improvement. Along with economic improvement there was personality development as well. (ii) IAY houses (iii) SGRY – road maintenance done and rice given to beneficiaries. For two to three months work was generated and beneficiaries were employed for which they were paid in cash and kind (money and rice were given) (iv) Under NOAPS Rs.100 per month were received by the beneficiaries and under NFBS Rs.10,000 were received by the beneficiaries families (v) SSK – where children studied for 5 hours a day.

On the question of difficulties faced while enjoying the development program the response were: (i) Bank far away so money and time spent on bank visits. Besides vehicles were few and not easily available for traveling (ii) The co-operation of bank employees were lacking at times (iii) At times the G.P. Office Staff were not available (iv) Beneficiaries found it difficult to give time for meetings and gatherings (as they had to travel from distance – further bad roads, lack of transportation and communication hindered their movements) (v) Initially to get the co-operation of members of SHGs posed a problem.

On being asked to make suggestions for improvement of development programs and overall development of the area the response of the beneficiaries were: Government was to provide the people with (i) Electricity (ii) Telephone connections (iii) Health Centers (iv) Transportation facilities (ropeway was suggested) (v) Schools (vi) More house schemes with repairing facilities (vii) Bridges and culverts (viii) Good roads (especially the main road was to be good) (ix) Set up Village Tourism (x) There were to be more jobs related to physical labor (as able bodied men of the village were seeking job

in Sikkim under PMGSY or working in coalmines of Meghalaya) (xi) BPL villagers should form SHG and aim to move from below poverty line to above poverty line. Each BPL family to be a member of a SHG.

A random sample of beneficiaries were taken up for study from various Municipal Wards (areas) of Darjeeling involved in Urban Self Employment Program (including SHGs of DWCUA and Slum areas), Urban Skill Development Program, Urban Wage Employment Program and Slum Development Program. The beneficiaries were mostly women because in these development programs priorities were accorded to women and development program like DWCUA was meant exclusively for women. The study revealed the following information:

**Table VI**  
**Distribution of the Respondents (B.P.L. Beneficiaries) in the Municipal areas of Darjeeling Town**

Schemes:-	USEP, DWCUA, Slum	UWEP		USDP
		Female	Male	Female
Total Beneficiaries:	22	3	5	11
Below 40 years	13	1	5	11
Above 40 years	9	2		
1) <u>Ethnicity:</u>				
Bhutia				
Gorkhali/Nepali	22	3	4	11
Lepcha				
Sherpa			1	
2) <u>Caste/Category:</u>				
General	2	2	2	4

Scheduled Caste	3			1
Scheduled Tribe	4	1	2	5
O.B.C.	13		1	1
Physical Handicap				
3) <u>Religion:</u>				
Animism				
Buddhism	4	1	2	5
Christianity	1			1
Hinduism	17	2	3	5
Islam				
4) <u>Education:</u> No Formal Education	5	1		
Primary	3	1	1	
Middle School	8	1	2	4
High School	6		1	5
Higher Secondary			1	1
Graduate				1
Post-Graduate				
5) <u>Occupation:</u>				
Labor	2	3	2	1
Small Business	16		1	
Teaching				
Housewife	2		2	
Unemployed	2			10

**SJSRY Urban Self-Employment Program (including DWCUA and Slum area beneficiaries)**

On the question of development and development programs/ schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Road (ii) Electricity (iii) School (iv) Drains (v) SHGs engaged in knitting, sewing, selling woolen garments, selling readymade garments, selling commodities like soap, surf etc.

The grievances of the beneficiaries were: (i) Public tap there but no water (ii) Some other beneficiaries said drinking water was provided once a week for one hour, so the people had to fetch water from a natural spring far away (iii) Bad street light (iv) Less number of Toilets that posed a problem to the people

On the question of benefits derived from the development programs the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) The DWCUA SHGs by knitting and selling woolen garments were able to earn some money (ii) By forming groups were able to work in cooperation, example some of the members of SHGs were engaged in knitting while others would sell their products at Chowrasta (iii) The DWCUA SHG expressed happiness at getting support and help from a local Municipal Councillor (iv) This group also expressed gratitude at getting help after the landslide in their area (Lower Tung Sung) in 24<sup>th</sup> September 2006 (v) Earned daily wage from road-making under UWEP, in this way earned some money (vi) In times of need got help from SHGs for example in sickness there was the assurance of the Members from SHG, and in times of financial need could get loan from the group. Some SHGs were just set up and in early stage so its members had not experienced benefit yet.

On the question of difficulties faced while enjoying the development program the response were: (i) Products could be sold only during season time and during off-season there was no sale (ii) Some women expressed inconvenience while devoting time to SHG, for example women complained of having to close shop to attend SHG meetings (iii) Some complained of the non availability of some staff in the Municipal Office and having to wait for them. (iv) DWCUA SHGs complained of having to visit the Municipal Office frequently for their work (v) Unemployment problem among the educated and uneducated were cited by respondents

On being asked to make suggestions for improvement of development programs and overall development of the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Loans to

be taken by beneficiaries from government to expand small business (ii) Beneficiaries form self-help-groups, work and derive advantages.

### **SJSRY Urban Skill-Development Program**

On the question of development /development programs /development schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries (here the beneficiaries were from different areas or wards of Darjeeling Municipality talking about their respective wards so there were mixed responses) were: (i) Light/Electricity (ii) Water Tank (iii) Family benefit for widow (iv) Unemployed men getting work under UWEP

The complains of the beneficiaries were (i) Problem of having only one toilet in the area which was also used by people walking on the main road (ii) Bad condition of the toilet (iii) Bad roads (iv) Drinking water problem (v) Drinking water problem, but water supplied by the Municipal vehicles (vi) Drainage problem – nothing done for this. In contrast to these response one beneficiary said that her area come in the area that led to the Council House (of DGHC). She described her area as VIP area where the roads were good and electricity was good too.

On the question of whether the purposes/objectives of the programs have been fulfilled the response were: (i) Some answered in the affirmative (ii) One said that some participants instead of learning skill development would be wasting time by missing classes (iii) Another response was that the general people's attitude was negative for they would say that by learning to make just jute bags nothing would be achieved.

On the question of benefits obtained from the development programs the response were: (i) Learning to use the Machine (ii) Learning to make Jute bags (iii) Learning to make shoes too in the process of making Jute bags (iv) Getting some pocket money (v) After getting trained aim to do some small business (vi) Obtain Training certificate (vii) Visit new places on exhibition (viii) Opportunity for self-improvement (ix) Got help from the Office staff.

On the question of being satisfied with the benefits most answered "yes". One respondent felt this training was for a very short time and wanted further training.

Another respondent felt it was better to learn to make bags than stay at home and waste time. Yet another respondent said they were availing of good facility free of cost.

On asked to make suggestions for improvement of the development programs and all round development of the area the suggestions were: (i) Participants themselves must be eager (ii) Learning skill development earnestly and practice it (iii) Replace plastic bags with jute bags (iv) Provide training year after year to benefit more women (v) Training to be imparted for longer period (this training was only for 19 days).

Researcher's observations: The participants were chatting away enjoying social interaction with each other. This group was learning jute bag making from a trainer from Kolkotta. Two of the participants carried mobile phones. In previous years other groups had learned hair cutting, soft toy making, driving etc.

#### **Urban Wage Employment Program (from 2006 onwards Employment Generation Program EGP)**

On the question of development of the area the respondents said that a footpath was made for the first time since the British days. The complain of the respondents were many: (i) Drinking water problem. Many in the area had to fetch water from a long distance. Some openly admitted of cutting water pipes of the area and stealing other people's drinking water. They said that they had no other option to cope with water crisis. (ii) There was problem of having no public toilets and in areas where there were toilets, the maintenance was bad. (iii) The area where the footpath was being made was landslide prone area which faced the problem of proper drainage. The respondents also pointed finger at one drain that was half done and left incomplete. (iv) The sewerage system of that area was also very old and in a bad state. So the people living around it feared that one day it would burst and bring disaster to the already fragile area which was already prone to landslide. (v) A beneficiary of UWEP living in a slum area complained of the bad electricity in his area where every week the electric lines had to be fixed. Regarding drinking water the people of his area collected money to buy an electric motor to draw water from a natural spring. In this way the people of that area would get 60 liters of water, per house, twice a week. [The Municipal Office Overseer informed that under

UWEP the work done were construction of roads, drains, footpaths, walls etc according to the needs of various areas and its people.]

On asked to make suggestions the responses were: (i) Local people to be engaged in UWEP (ii) Work is to be provided for greater number of people (iii) Keep one's area clean

### **Beneficiaries from Slum Area**

On the question of development /development programs /development schemes implemented in the area the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Water tanks (money for which was provided by DGHC) (the natural spring water was tapped on the community's own initiative) (ii) Community hall cum school (iii) Tree planting by a High School near the area (iv) SHG engaged in skill development programs like making bags, paper bags, pickle, envelop, tailoring, knitting, and flower selling.

The complain that they voiced were: (i) Bad roads which old people found difficult to walk (ii) Small number of toilets posed a problem where people using them were more (iii) Unemployment was a major problem (iv) From Municipal tap water came for only 10 minutes (v) No street lights (f) Overall condition of the area was bad (vii) The community hall was partitioned and made into classrooms. If there were social function in the area like marriage or death then classes would have to be called off. Otherwise also since a hall was partitioned into rooms there would be disturbances while the classes were taken.

On the question of benefits derived from the development programs the response of the beneficiaries were: (i) Cutting and tailoring (ii) Shopping-bag making (iii) Certificate obtained after training (iv) Training of Group Leader (for 7 days) (v) Organization of quiz, song and dance. Exhibition taken to Siliguri and Kolkotta. Learning management of money and proper utilization of money. (vi) Social benefit of working in a SHG. By social interaction gain self-confidence and self-reliance. Organize blood donation camps and generate Aids awareness among people.

On asked to make suggestions for improvement of the development programs and all round development of the area the suggestions were: (i) Further training courses required (ii) Various skill development training needed (iii) Training on fashion

designing to be provided (iv) Products of SHGs like shopping bag, paper bag, envelop etc to be sold by shops (v) Cookery classes to be organized (vi) Youths to be provided with employment incentives by government (vii) Need for adult education (viii) Water to be disinfected (ix) Set up health services (x) School buildings required (xi) Legal advisor required.

### Concluding Remarks

The study of the responses of the beneficiaries of various Gram Panchayats and of various Municipal Wards of Darjeeling were undertaken to find out:

- i. If the development work under various development programs/development schemes were being done/implemented at the grassroots level?
- ii. If the beneficiaries were aware of the development work being done/implemented under various development programs/schemes in their areas?
- iii. If the benefits were reaching the beneficiaries or not?
- iv. If the beneficiaries were satisfied with these development works done under various development programs/development schemes?
- v. What difficulties the beneficiaries faced while enjoying the development programs/development schemes?
- vi. If the beneficiaries had suggestions for improvement of these development works/development programs/development schemes?

The study of the responses of the beneficiaries of various G.P.s and of various Municipal Wards of Darjeeling revealed that:

- i. The development work was being done in both rural and urban areas and that various development programs/development schemes were being implemented.
- ii. The beneficiaries were aware of the development works/development programs/development schemes being done/implemented around their areas. They were not acquainted with some of the names of the development programs/schemes. They were even more aware of the lack of development works/development programs/development schemes in their areas. In other word the beneficiaries were aware of the development

works/development programs/development schemes not being done or not being done properly in their areas.

- iii. The benefits of the development programs were reaching the beneficiaries – that is they were getting economic and social assistance. But allegations of miss-appropriation of funds of these development programs/development schemes were voiced. Example of such allegations were that the IAY beneficiaries were not getting the full amount of money. That there were mis-use of funds in Shiksha Kendras and in the Midday Meal Schemes. That when beneficiaries received loans from various development programs/schemes they had to provide ‘chai-pani’ to the government officials or provide them gifts in cash or kind.
- iv. The beneficiaries expressed satisfaction of the various rural, rural cum urban and urban development programs implemented in their areas. They expressed dissatisfaction of some development works done and absence of some development works in their areas, like – (a) Bad provisions for drinking water (b) Bad electricity (c) Bad roads (d) Bad conditions of toilets and lesser number of toilets than required. Lack of (e) Schools (f) Health centers (g) Small scale industries (h) Banking institutions and (i) Post Offices (the rural areas faced the problem of not having adequate banking institutions and post offices).
- v. Some of the difficulties the beneficiaries faced while enjoying the development programs were: Teething problem at the initial stage of forming Self-Help-Groups.  
 Long distance to Bank, Market, Dairy, Training Centre, etc.  
 Long time taken to get IAY benefits.  
 Not getting Maternity Benefit on time by women beneficiaries under National Maternity Benefit Scheme.  
 High cost of construction especially for those living in remote areas.  
 Lack of transportation and communication especially in remote areas.  
 The inability to pay back loans.  
 Non-availability of staff in Government offices.  
 Having to frequently visit the Government Office to get a work done.
- vi. The beneficiaries suggested that the quota of various development programs be increased so more BPL people could become beneficiaries and derive benefits.

They wanted more loans to be sanctioned and subsidy for loans to be provided by the Government.

They suggested more money to be provided as government aid. Considering the high price rise of modern times the beneficiaries wanted more funds, especially the beneficiaries of OAPS who felt that getting Rs.100 per month as pension amounted to peanuts. The IAY beneficiaries also pointed out the high cost involved in the construction of houses in the hills compared to the plains.

Some beneficiaries suggested that benefits did not reach the beneficiaries on time especially the beneficiaries of NMBS who received benefits late – they received benefits not at the time of child birth but long after the child was born.

The beneficiaries also wanted more opportunities and incentives for self-employment and wage employment. They wanted more jobs related to physical labour. They wanted more skill development training sessions and for longer duration by which they could acquire more skills.

The beneficiaries also wanted scientific and technical knowledge to be imparted to them whereby they could improve themselves in the field of their choice both in rural as well as in urban areas.

The beneficiaries wanted Melas (fairs) to be organized by the government where SHG products and other village products could be exhibited and sold.

The beneficiaries also wanted training and aid from government by which they could show their products in exhibitions held in other parts of India. They wanted knowledge on marketing and selling of their products based on modern technology.

There were two areas considered to be a success in Darjeeling hills by the beneficiaries. One was the construction of Community Halls and the second was the setting up and working of self-help-groups – both in rural as well as in urban areas. The lack of basic civic amenities /basic infrastructures were considered to be the biggest failure by the beneficiaries.

In conclusion it can be said that for development to reach the beneficiaries sincere efforts were required to provide them with the benefits of development work/development program/development schemes and to see that they get the basic civic

amenities and basic infrastructure by which they can improve their standard of living as promised in the Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution of India. In addition they are also to be educated on preserving and sustaining these development works/programs/schemes which would benefit many generations to come in future.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> *Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), Guidelines Effective from 01.04.2002*, Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Rural Development, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> *Annual Administrative Report 2003-2004*, Op cit, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> SGRY Guidelines, Op cit, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> *Guidelines for Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)*, Effective from 01.04.2004, Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Rural Development, Krishi-Bhawan, New Delhi, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pp. 5-6.

<sup>14</sup> *Annual Administrative Report 2003-2004*, Op cit, p. 38.

<sup>15</sup> *Annual Administrative Report 2001-2002*, Department of Panchayats and Rural Development, Government of West Bengal, p. 27.

<sup>16</sup> Extension Officer Panchayat, Kurseong in an Interview dated 21<sup>st</sup> April 2005.

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<sup>19</sup> *Sunchari Samachar*, Siliguri, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

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- <sup>22</sup> Ibid, pp. 30-31.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 21.
- <sup>24</sup> *Annual Administrative Report 2001-2002*; Op cit, p. 31.
- <sup>25</sup> Soil Conservation Officer on an Interview dated May 2005.
- <sup>26</sup> *WARSA – JAN SAHBHAGITA, Guidelines for National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR)*, Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Rainfed Farming Systems Division, 2000, pp.1-2.
- <sup>27</sup> Soil Conservation Officer in an Interview dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2005.
- <sup>28</sup> *Annual Administrative Report 2001-2002*, Op cit, p. 31.
- <sup>29</sup> *WARSA, Guidelines for NWDPR* Op cit, p. 4.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 11.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 86.
- <sup>32</sup> 'Gana Udhog Gathith Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi, Prashikshan Nirdeshika' SSK Training Manual, (UNICEF and State Education Department, Kolkatta) Translated from Bengali into Gorkhali Language by DGHC Primary Education Department, Darjeeling, 2000, p. 8.
- <sup>33</sup> *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, A Program for Universal Elementary Education*, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 2006, pp. 1-6.
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- <sup>35</sup> Ibid, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>36</sup> *Accounts Manual of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Part –I Program Funds Prepared for National Rural Roads Development Agency*, New Delhi, Institute of Public Auditors of India New Delhi, July 2004, p. 6.
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- <sup>40</sup> *Annual Administrative Report 2001-2002*, Op cit, p. 32.
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- <sup>63</sup> *Bidhayak Elaka Unnayan Prakalpa*, Op cit.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid.
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- <sup>82</sup> Ibid, p. 4.
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- <sup>84</sup> *Urban Wage Employment Program (SJSRY) Guidelines (SUDA) Calcutta 1997, pp. 16-18.*
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